

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/790,685
Amendment filed February 3, 2005
Reply to OA dated November 3, 2004

REMARKS:

Claims 1-10 are currently being considered, of which claims 1 and 4-6 have been amended.

No new claims have been added. Applicants believe that no new matter has been introduced.

The Examiner has stated that claims 4 and 6-8 set forth allowable subject matter.

The Examiner has noted that claims 4 and 6-8 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 4 and 6 have been rewritten in independent form including limitations of the base claims. Thus, Applicants, respectfully submit that this objection should be withdrawn.

Before turning to the cited art, a brief review of the present invention is in order. The present invention relates to a joint connector including a terminal received by a terminal receiving chamber in a connector housing; and a coupling member to electrically connect a plurality of terminals with each other, wherein a supporting part to slidably support the coupling member is provided at a wall of the terminal receiving chamber, the supporting part being arranged to form a sliding path along a lengthwise direction of a wire received by the terminal, wherein a resiliently clipping member is provided at the terminal to clip the coupling member at a slide end of the supporting part.

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Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by USP 5,545,055 (**Tanaka**).

Claims 5, 9, and 10 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Tanaka**.

Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections of claims 1-3, 5, 9, and 10.

The present invention features a coupling member 50 that slides along (parallel to) a lengthwise direction of wire 47 when the coupling member 50 slides along notch 30 to be received by the resiliently clipping member 40.

On the contrary, **Tanaka** appears to describe a bus bar piece 31a which can be press-fitted in a reception groove 25a to form an interference fit (col. 4, lines 10-11; FIG. 4). The piece 31a appears to be moved in a first direction downward into the groove 25a (FIG. 4). That first direction is perpendicular to a lengthwise direction of the wire 30 connected to wire barrel 23. In view of the above, when the piece 31a is moved into groove 25a, the piece 31a is not moved in the lengthwise direction of the wire 30.

Tanaka fails to describe, teach, suggest the following features of claim 1, as amended: “the supporting part being arranged to form a sliding path along a lengthwise direction of a wire received by the terminal”, in combination with the other claimed features. These features of claim 1, as

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amended, are supported by FIG. 1 of the present invention.

Tanaka fails to describe, teach, suggest the following features of claim 5, as amended: “said coupling member having a pair of free ends extending along a lengthwise direction of a wire received by the terminal, the free ends being formed to receive and clip said coupling member when said coupling member slides along the lengthwise direction of the wire”, in combination with the other claimed features. These features of claim 5, as amended, are supported by FIG. 6A of the present invention.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, all claims currently being considered are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants’ undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an Interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure: Amendment Transmittal